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ORIENTAL RUGS AND CARPETS.

BY W. L. D. O'GRADY.

A SERIES OF ARTICLES.—NUMBER FOUR.

A good idea of some of these carpets is conveyed in the illustrations of our previous and present articles, for which we are indebted to Mr. Edgar, the manager of the Oriental Carpet Department of Messrs. Joseph Wild & Co., a gentleman who has resided in India, and is exceptionally able to give correct information about his goods.

We might also mention, though we do it with diffidence from the absurdity of the fact, that among other queer things introduced as Oriental rugs and portières are what are called "durries," which are coarse cotton arrangements of indigo striped with turmeric, fast colors, and showy enough, but, as a matter of fact, nearly all of those imported are not really "durries" at all, but the national *winter petticoats* of the Canarese women.

We might mention the silk rugs of Burmah, very exquisite things, but none are here yet, we believe, and though, we understand, some imitations of them are on the way from India, we are not aware of their arrival.

It might not be amiss, too, to invite attention to the delicate grass mats of Vellore, which are famous throughout India, and are very expensive. Of finest fabric, thick but pliable, and exquisitely patterned, they form the most delightful mattresses in hot weather, for which purpose they are much used in those terrible days on the Coromandel coast, where the hot March winds blow, and the thermometer jumps up to 116 degrees in the shade.

A word as to the use of these rugs. The best place to put them is on a plain hardwood floor, or a stained pine floor will do. To cover up a parquetry floor is to do justice to neither, to gild the lily, or as the prudent Scot would say, "'tis a waeiful waste to spoil the taste of good butter with marmalade. Tak' one or t'ither." In default of any of these, a plain ingrain carpet or strip around a room, if of decidedly subdued color and not invested with too ambitious Moresque effects of its own, is no bad substitute. In Summer, China matting forms a cool, pleasant and elegant back-ground.

We should recommend the purchase of the best rugs of whatever style may be desired. They will wear best, and always be valuable, while in some kinds, they will appreciate in value every day.

Finally, the best way to take care of choice Oriental rugs, is to keep them in constant use. It is impossible to wear them out. The moth is the only destructive agency that need be feared (except, of course, fire, corrosive acids or dynamite, which careful people are apt to steer clear of) and the best way to outflank the moth is to use the rugs daily, have them taken up and beaten very frequently, and if, by any chance it becomes necessary to shut up a house and store the furniture, the rugs after most thorough beating should be thickly showered with dry tobacco dust, pepper and powdered camphor, and then rolled up securely in carbolized brown paper. As to where to put them, that may safely be left to the taste of the mistress of the mansion, as long as it is somewhere on the floor. It would be obviously incongruous to put a cream centre Mirzapore, an olive Persian, an old gold Daghestan and a bright blue Coula in close juxtaposition in a parlor where maroon was

the controlling influence, and we should not recommend putting a \$500 Agra carpet in a nursery.

Above all things to be avoided is the cruelty of cutting up a genuine antique—or modern, for that matter—Oriental rug to make a sofa or chair cover. There are plenty of excellent imitations quite good enough for such purposes.

And we may suggest that it is well to add to the Orientalism of the rugs something else redolent of the East, such as vases of the hammered brass of Benares, Vizagapatam buffalo horn, sandal wood and silver work, Bulgarian portières on bamboo poles with *repoussé* Dacca or Cochlin silver filagree knobs, etc.

A very charming little smoking-room fitted up in one of the new houses built by Messrs. J. G. & R. B. Lynd, in East 72d Street near Madison Avenue, is all Oriental, but with an eclectic adaptation of good things from widely separated localities. The mantelpiece is of oak cut on the site of the house, carved very beautifully after a Moorish pattern, with some unique and very ancient Persian

and not much more expensive than first-class Brussels carpet. Such a floor covering has an old time and Eastern look about it, and it may be taken up and shaken with comparative ease, a few nails along the edges keeping it in place when down.

No furniture can possibly look well upon a carpet which in color and design is loud and obtrusive.

VERY dark carpets and walls absorb the light, and are apt to make a room gloomy—which of all rooms should not characterize a parlor. It is therefore better to select a medium tint, against which objects will stand in good relief and yet permit a cheerful aspect under the evening gas. The carpet should be rich in colors but without marked contrasts, and the designs small and indefinite.

A ROOM with a grand new looking carpet in it and very little else, is a dreary place enough; while one with straw matting and home-made rugs, or stained floor and rug, and furnished with suitable objects and a few plants and flowers, is very attractive.

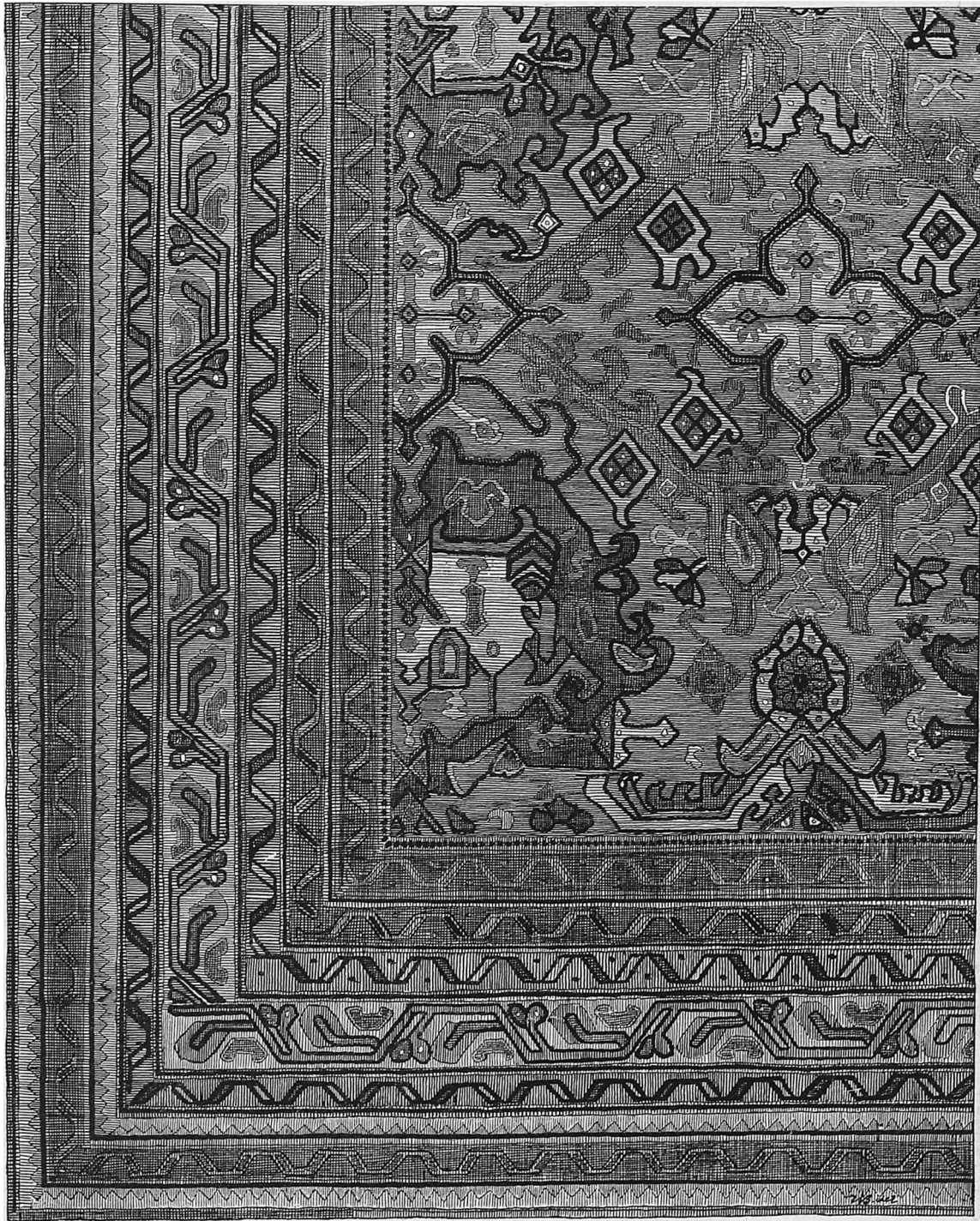
A CRIMSON carpet of very small pattern, in two or three soft shades, is very pretty with a dark floor border, particularly if the paper be pale pink or cream color, with corner lines of crimson in it. With this carpet the furniture covering should be ashes of roses, ornamented with crimson fringe and brass-headed nails; sofas of divan shape, well stuffed, but no wood-work visible.

A DECORATIVE treatment of a small parlor or music room would be by paneling the lower portion of the walls with a deal dado, delicately painted in yellowish pink or blue, and covering the general wall surface with a golden toned paper, arranged in panels to suit the proportion of the room with painted and stencil arabesque patterns on the dividing spaces; the frieze treated with good figure or ornamental enrichment of canvas-plaster or papier-maché in low relief, painted white, with a groundwork of reddish gold or Bartolozzi engraving tint. The floor might have a border of light ebony and maple or boxwood parquetry, with a low toned Persian carpet in the centre, with easy lounges or divans all around the room for rest and comfort, the centre space being left clear of furniture,

so as to allow of ample room for guests passing through to other rooms, or to congregate whilst listening to song and music.

A SOFA to be really serviceable should not be covered with pale blue satin or maize colored taboret, but with a good tapestry covering in a neutral hue, say sage green or dark rusty red, to wear well. The tapestry should not be too fine to lie down upon, or even in the privacy of family life to lay one's feet upon. And the whole sofa should, if possible, turn toward the fire, so that its occupant may have his face toward the cheerful glow. At the same time a little wicker-work table—black and gold if you will—may hold a lamp for reading.

THE shape of a room has much to do with its general effect, and a long narrow room lacks the capabilities of a square or an octagon.



A TURKEY CARPET.

tiles embayed in cornice and pilasters. A divan or two richly covered, a couple of rugs, different but harmonizing with each other and everything else, and a curtain hung with studied negligence, complete the simple but very effective decoration.

Costly though they may be thought, there is really nothing so economical in the long run nor so continuously satisfying in the adornment of a home as a well selected assortment of choice Oriental rugs.

VERY few carpets are properly used; they are stretched into every possible corner, so that not an inch of space shall be uncovered, and places are notched out for the various recesses until the expensive fabric is utterly spoiled for any other room than the one in which it is fitted. It is not handsome arranged in this way, being far more picturesque as a large square or oblong rug, showing all round it a yard or so of dark polished floor. A border of inlaid wood work is very pretty